

# Contributors



Reb Livingston  
Helen Losse  
Christine Klocek-Lim  
Grace Cavalieri  
Amy King  
Lars Palm  
Daryl Rogers  
Lesley Jenike  
Karl Parker  
Luc Simonic  
Tom Blessing  
Dave Ruslander  
Marl Hartenbach

O

C

H

CINCO

Reb Livingston

*God Gets Close*

You scratch the garnets on everything you unclasp

There's a missing set of silverware and freezer full of untouched waffles

God gets close and you depart with only trinkets in the night

You are the hand in the pocket of a ghost with a waning appetite

Tomorrow I'll drop an opal down my camisole and draw a map

A Musical Exercise: In  
Which the Kids Die and  
a Star Cooks the Meat

Helen Losse

This mystical frolic amid my sad dreams:  
The moon glowing rabid deep in the night.

The children of starry day are gone—

slipping beyond blue, pausing briefly,  
growing cold. Eye of rib roasting

upon a velvet star.

Summer Miscarriage

Christine Klocek-Lim

My grass hoards her dew  
in the shade of broken things.  
She hides under the bent eave,  
under the mossed deck,  
under the rusted car in the field.

She ignores the slug  
bloomed in the earth's womb,  
cries though there is no rain.

She knows autumn is months away  
from taking off her red jacket,  
from dropping the withered leaves  
down to sleep.

## La Cucaracha

Grace Cavalieri

I usually liked to put on a turban  
at age ten and  
become Carmen Miranda  
with a tablecloth skirt  
ruffled at the bottom and pinned  
at the waist with a big red flower.  
I can't say what got over me  
the night Uncle Phil was to be shipped out .  
He sat all sad in his brown uniform downstairs  
waiting for the music to start  
but I was frozen beside my plaster statue  
of the Virgin Mary.  
My mother came up and begged me  
Just this once. Dance for your Uncle Phil  
who's going away to war and might get killed.  
Finally the day slipped away taking my  
Uncle with it, leaving me with a  
turban filled with fruit on the bed,  
big hooped earrings, and an old record,  
although I could not sing, even if  
life and death were at stake.  
Maybe that's why the little girl held out.  
Maybe that's why one day Uncle Phil took grief  
for a bride and died of cancer.  
Maybe that's why we should  
always dance when asked, especially  
if we made the costume ourselves.

Grace Cavalieri

## At Jan's Funeral

Because of Jan I dyed my hair red and asked her family if they liked it.  
True, it spiked at first but after I washed it, it flowed and the color matched  
hers. Her mother kissed me on the mouth. Although wet, it was the first  
sign of approbation. Jan's brother, the one with the cane, pretended horror  
although red hair made my eyes light brown and not so intense. It was the  
least I could do. I told them dying was just putting things back where they  
belong. This is the self-same mother who sent me home crying after Mass  
for chanting "Poor Aunt Baloney" like the Latin. Maybe she likes me now  
I thought. Or is it what the newscast would call simply speculation.

## Whoever Pimps the Abyss Must Be Joking

Amy King

I'm giving over a substitute element,  
a blue thing cloning forever after  
we outlasted products of rotary dials,  
a coming round to new positions  
that reenacts a spineless spirit, religiously-scripted

How can I be mad at people if I'm people—  
at the end of a shoestring, bullets  
become some kind of love we're coaxed to sing, holy  
scrubbing my face from my face, another you for you.

In an adjacent bedroom, your pocket horses  
gallop from the corners of the grand hypotenuse:  
let her be a series of nomadic bodies & tattoos.

As for the general shift of things, my switchblade  
glistens in a corner mask,  
lifts her wine glass to smiling  
photos drawn to the human pink form, and asks,  
Do we leave or snuggle after phone sex?

The ego behind the delivery that would have us  
invest in elliptical flesh goes dormant.  
My usual regret clouds the sheath's contents:  
a sharper stamina that fails to ripen,  
leaving participants beside ourselves open.

## TORN FOREGROUND

A hole grows from a tree trunk, ringed mouthpiece, parts surround imperceptible flux. Mental brambles in physical thickets, the thickest edge on things you can put, even wicker baskets or wires from a torn foreground, games in places we pull 'em from fundamentally, make us up.

And the sun and the other stars a love that moves leavingly? How know there's no why. Place mutates, productive. Terrible things in an instant, crush life from them. Hole growing and do right by, beside and through the tree. Tow your own whereabouts about, snailglass, leaves listening, shinetrail

larvae. We feed ground as we go to tiny cumulative right things numinous. Blind curling lives, no need for eyes, no need for eyes and mouths no throats at all, we're what those things were afterwards, until speechbirth. Later this evening, nothing screaming.

## OBJECT LESSON

Place the kingpiece on the mantel in a manila envelope, and make like there's nothing in the world you'd like better

to do than do nothing but exactly what and whatever you happen to end up doing, now 'til daybreak, with yourself and or your inner

mirrorimage, if it matters. Might never makes right; night takes often frightfully meaningful seconds to decide, as things endgame

a grave at a time outside, static crackling, a hovering where we end up and out. Meantime, decisions live and walk wired to us moving.

## SAVE AS YOU GO

Then plum the innards, lug the guts, do what you have slash want to do, as it produces its equally opposite reactions too.

Try not to go around gurgling if you can. Repeatedly report to zoos —no, scratch that, try to lick that, it's not of or like the good for you

who leave scratchmarks on tree trunks as you're torn on clawing at whizzing space. Ragged wakes remain in air. Make do,

make do, make do. Dance and sing among the sick and dead, down in there are more than words, pulse of thought through things.

a man (hence not lana turner) has collapsed in the street. his dog is licking his face. probably the way he normally wakes him up. when the ambulance arrives the dog is moved out of the way. i'm drinking my first beer in more than a month. it tastes good. the wind makes the sunny side of the street cool enough to sit on looking cool or trying to while thinking of what to write to who. the cars mostly taxis & buses distract my attention from a family of drunk germans taking the word noisy to new dimensions. because hospital stays can get expensive here i hope the man gets up soon

O

C

H

O

# Daryl Rogers Full-Moon Drunk

(1982)

I'm met at the door  
by a disgusted look  
until I ask for the owner  
by her nickname.

It's a dyke bar  
with no sign on the street  
in the basement  
of a shopping center.

The owner and I have  
drank beer together.  
She knows the woman  
that just left me.

The other patrons  
simmer as she sets  
a beer in front of me,  
on the house.

Then I decide to flirt.  
I start buying beers too.  
The should love me  
but they don't.

Several women  
fantasize about  
grabbing my clueless  
ass, the way a group

of apes might  
grab a pig and drag it  
squealing to the river  
and drown it.

I'm not so drunk  
that I believe I can read  
their minds, mind you,  
but I can.

I leave, too late,  
for a friends house  
where it'll be different.  
He'll be happy to see me.

He's working on his  
Harley when I pull up.  
We smoke a joint  
and head to the house.

His wife rolls her eyes  
when I walk in the door.  
I sit down on a rug  
and begin to talk.

He doesn't say much.  
She sulks in silence.  
I wind up on the road  
as night nosedives

into morning, calling  
someone I used to know  
from a pay phone  
at three a.m.

Luc Simonic

## Tradition & Deliverance

*after C. A. Goodworth art explained  
(drafted 08-03-06 @ the plaza, stnta fe, nm)*

When we deliver sounds into the world,  
It involves choices, not un-similar  
To lines, whose lineage transposed against  
Heaven & angst – inbred – the dark stallion  
& the mare from such similar bloodlines.

Such pumping in the mount, the nostrils, the  
Silent peripheral – left eye, right eye –  
Two sides of the world while filling a slick  
Cavern with what he has.

She, four shoes to  
The ground, understands something more than weight,  
The spur of his front quarter hooves, the view  
They share of right & left, their stillborn colt,

Not quite conceived. A man will mount her in  
The morn –

saddled, she becomes reminded  
Of her bearing – shadows – light & steel heels  
Scarring her deep chest, over the long years.

The stallion is hard & wild –

sadly no  
Cowboy suffered long enough his reigns to  
Break. Broken sunset always on one side,  
Always on one side, always where he goes.

*His fatherhood now nourishing the grass –  
Where he'll graze decreasingly – until then.*

## Lars Palm

bicycles from

to many

they yearn for the sun

(o sun)

they can be seen on  
their bicycles

around  
infected by the warmth of the sun

thus are the inhabit

used by different districts  
each one with its own  
fire

o streets

bathe bicycles from

*small note: this poem was shortened &  
arranged from a text on the inside neck of a t-shirt*

## Dave Ruslander

### Within/Without

I kneel within the last pew,  
alone, hiding  
from God and myself.  
Across from the Virgin Mary,  
a rummy-eyed beggar  
rolls his rosary.

The beads reflect  
my bowed head –  
string mop hair,  
shaggy white beard,  
a face without light.

I am unnoticed by the living  
perhaps I am dead.

## THE TROUBLE WITH ALOCATION\_Karl Parker

That guy yelling outside, I certainly hope he's a patron of the arts.

Just why that (or perhaps that) is funny is certainly a serious and sad and yes  
actual even autobiographical situation, my dear friends gathered here today. Oh—.

Woops. The glories of imposterism being what they are, he's probably someone else  
by the time you get this.

I just can't believe the mail these days, I mean these news. But don't worry,  
I won't enter into that again. Last time there was trouble.

Hold a damaged head above ground. In every case you're never the same.

He's gone. Somewhere else is yelling. Brightness falls.

(slicing dishes)

*for Luis Muñoz, spanish poet*

washing fish. not gutting or cutting it. un  
tingling the nets. tangling the early afternoon. now  
swoon. & a good & a nourishing evening to you. if  
the car oils the brakes of the ants. the buses will  
live in interesting times. & in a timely manner. in  
such a way that they will need to apologize to  
no one. or so most of their near & dear ones  
dearly hope. nearly dope but not quite doping. now  
the duke is duped by the buttered butler who  
everybody says did it. but what? to whom?  
when? the reasons will reveal themselves half  
an hour after the fact or when the fish is clean

---

## What's So Ancient Can Return

Lesley Jenike

I would've danced with that coelacanth but its eye sucked  
all light and color from the spinning, crystal-hot dance floor.  
My dress seemed flat. The night straightened it with its iron

of a moon. As a child I watched it play dead in the trees.  
Now I'm grown. Let there be no more flirting. I'm tired of it.  
That hoary fish's bounty of fins keeps it suspended, hovering

at the balustrade, and my skin crawls, remembering: I grew up  
land-locked though my tender, internal eye loved in theory  
the dunes, loved the Southern Cross from a deck chair

on a patio and below, that warm pool of blood on earth's floor  
from which the coelacanth draws its old-time bliss. No more fear.  
I earned these legs, what the primordial wants but can't pull off;

too much time has passed. Its eye's vortex drained the ceiling  
of its heaven, swapping it with constellation all neon and neon,  
a city skyline packed wholly into the womb of the room where

I waited, dance book filling with my own name. I'm the nacreous  
cloud at every winter party, that season only we who have become  
naked despite chiffon or herringbone can suffer, for deep under-

water what's frigid becomes peace. Palaces built of anemone  
and stoned coral bear our old selves, music coming from useless  
windows; what goes out only comes back in. The tide understands.



# A Cool May Day

Dave Ruslander

There's coolness in the air today  
clinging to me like swirling water  
cleaves to a draining basin as the doctor  
tells me mother only has a few months left.

She was dying but no one wanted to believe it.  
She made me promise – no hospital bed in the living room  
while she convalesced. I kept the promise

until the day before she died.  
I told her it would only be for one night,  
until we could rearrange the guest room,  
but we both knew what the living room meant.

She felt so cool when I picked her up that May day.

It is early morning, the time of the white widow –  
that hour before sunrise when the black is sucked out of the sky.  
Her breathing sounds like a rasp to a horse's hoof.  
She turned her head toward me and opened her eyes.

There's no need to fight anymore, you have been a good mother  
you can rest, and I saw the light fade from her eyes.  
That's when I truly realized each of us is in a fight for our life – unaided and by  
ourselves.

Quickly and without warning, I came to understand the laws of thermodynamics  
even though I never took physics, and all because I heard her death rattle  
and can now identify life's ontology –

You must play the game.  
You cannot win.  
You cannot break even.  
You cannot quit the game.

Far off images convulse in Dixie's humid summer  
and my mind obsesses. Everyday  
takes figuring out all over again how to live.



# OCHO





## letter to salome that will end up on the cutting room floor

even an ambiguous gray area can squeeze one out of the picture.  
so we search for alternatives of a different geometry. we look  
for another life. we look for some control-though we swore it  
off long ago.

mark hartenbach

we might look deep inside ourselves as a last resort.

we wade absent-mindedly into the river. the water may be  
running far too fast from spring runoff for religious ceremony.  
so we wave away those waiting on shore.

we want answers. then we ignore them. or deny the words  
completely. we might hold on to them awhile-until they  
puncture our heart, until we have them memorized, until  
they turn to ash in our fingers. though we cling tight until  
the heat becomes unbearable.

but we seldom get the answer we want. only occasionally  
do we get an answer we need.

so we console ourselves by remembering how she danced.  
how she moved-as if there was nothing but time & time  
was a twelve cylinder roar that we didn't always catch but  
that never stopped us from trying. & we remember how she  
pleased someone so much that we finally lost our head.

## **ARRANGING THE HEAD FOR BLOSSOMS**

So it smells the air, so it is sure to breathe  
and perceive the air for all its occasions, as hard as that is  
to believe; one can't think the head.

Blossoms and buried things too open  
to daylight divisions of day, sunmotes  
pollenbreaking over us in a warm air of waves. When

and where we're divisible radiates  
earthcircling in wormloam. Nowhere's threadbare,  
nowhere's not already home. Ground breathes, warm.



**KARL  
PARKER**

## **LETTER TO A YOUNG GOAT**

When in somber mood write somber poem.

When in umber mood, as above. Yes, at the risk of being corny  
or being called corny, whichever you think's  
worse, though corn's of course  
an important often canned yellow source  
of life, but only as it were.

These imperatives are literally whathaveyou. All of the above. Or  
No really, as *you* like it.

And don't forget to be interesting, at least as much as  
the weather always is, as I've learned (you  
were right, Mark, after all, though I laughed at the time)

(nothing against laughter, mind you,  
and ha, so there). When at Lenin's grave  
do—or don't do, doesn't matter—as Dali and Didi did; no road  
leads away enough from Rome for me at the moment, and the rest  
are paved with the best fucking, though  
tattered, intentions money can buy. And while you're at it, enjoy  
thought as it twists and turns  
*burning words from its arms* somehow, yes, exactly that,  
that's as and how it appears now, exactly  
as it were and we'd have it, sure we would in time and did.  
*Thought has a body like a blistered star.*

Then we and you and I and it went on to other forms

## Night Deepens

Tom Blessing

and snow falls slowly  
through the soft lights  
from the house

an old man stands  
beside his mailbox  
he stares at the stars  
he cannot see

there is no sleep  
his lonely bones  
have called him  
out into this  
silence

## House of Repute in the Boomtown

this is the house that Ruth built  
gentle women trembled here with fake desire  
a week's pay in this town of men  
where love was always a false horizon

Toulouse would have been at home here  
his sketchbook on his knee  
his pen moving faster  
than the whore's hips

Grace Cavalieri

## Swan Lake

Having a mother who's a writer  
is different from a mother who bakes cookies.  
That's why my children emailed each other,  
when they saw a picture of me  
standing on points, satin toe shoes,  
a stiff tutu, with a tiara on top my laquered head.  
I looked like a silver string had been pulled from  
hell to heaven with me in the middle.  
*Look at mom, they said, how pretty, perfection, every hair in place.*  
What a disgrace to tell them it was my cousin Marilyn  
with the Stuttgart ballet who slipped away to  
reclusion and cancer, one lonely autumn day.

I on the other hand had the dirty toe shoes,  
the ones with bloodstained toes inside  
and never stood still look enough for a photo, much less a pose.  
Hair flopping, just like now, messy as ever, rushing along,  
For a moment I thought I'd take the credit and make them proud.  
But for momentary glory, that would be wrong. I'll tell them  
who I really am, no satin, nothing to brag about, still going strong.

OCHO is available at  
[www.lulu.com/mipo](http://www.lulu.com/mipo).

Submissions are open to present  
or past contributors of  
*MiPOesias Magazine*  
[www.mipoesias.com](http://www.mipoesias.com).

Send new work to  
[didimenendez@verizon.net](mailto:didimenendez@verizon.net).

*Designed and edited from  
Didi Menendez' desk.*

COPYRIGHT REMAINS WITH  
CONTRIBUTORS  
A MENENDEZ PUBLICATION

# OCHO